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INFO AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

AMEMBASSY MANILA

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

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LIMDIS

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, TH

SUBJ: ASSESSMENT OF TRENDS AND DEVELOPMENTS IN THAILAND

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

SAIGON PLEASE PASS ASSISTANT SECRETARY INGERSOLL

INTRODUCTION: THE FOLLOWING REPORT IS IN RESPONSE TO
ASSISTANT SECRETARY INGERSOLL'S LETTER OF 20 DECEMBER
1973 CALLING FOR PERIODIC ANALYTICAL REPORTING OF TRENDS

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AND DEVELOPMENTS.

SUMMARY: THE SUCCESSION OF EVENTS FOLLOWING THE OCTOBER OVERTHROWN OF THE THANOM GOVERNMENT PRECIPITATED AN UPSURGE OF ANTI-AMERICAN SENTIMENT. THERE HAVE ALSO BEEN A SPATE OF CONFLICTING RUMORS ALLEGING US/CIA INVOLVEMENT IN PLOTS TO ASSASSINATE THE KING, TO OVERTHROWN THE SANYA GOVERNMENT, AND TO BRING BACK TO POWER ONE OR MORE OF THE OUSTED TRIO. OTHER FAMILIAR SENSITIVITIES TO THE AMERICAN MILITARY PRESENCE REEMERGED WITH NEW VIRILENCE, TO WIT, COMPLAINTS OF TAX FREE PX IMPORTS, AND ALLEGATIONS THAT AMERICAN BASES INFRINGED ON THAI SOVEREIGNTH AND HINDERED THAILAND'S FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT TOWARDS IMPROVING RELATIONS WITH THE DRV AND PRC. ANTI-AMERICAN COMMENTARY ON THESE THEMES ALSO FOCUSED ON AMBASSADOR KINTNER'S FORMER BRIEF AND ALLEGED CURRENT CIA CONNECTION AND HIS MILITARY BACKGROUND. JUST WHEN IT APPEARED THAT THE FEVER WAS ABOUT TO BREAK, THE SAKON NAHON LETTER INCIDENT PLAYED DIRECTLY INTO THE HANDS OF OUR CRITICS AND STIMULATED AN OUTBURST OF VITUPERATIVE ANTI-AMERICAN HOSTILITY THAT SEEMS UNLIKELY TO SUBSIDE IN THE NEAR FUTURE. THE MOST RECENT AMERICAN FAUX PAS, INVOLVING AMERICAN TEENAGE VISITORS CLIMBING ON A SACRED BUDDHA IMAGE, PRESENTS THE SO FAR UNEXPLOITED POTENTIAL OF EXACERBATING ANTI-WESTERN CULTURAL PARANOIA AMONG THE THAI AND ADDING TO OUR PROBLEMS HERE. THE KING, THE PRIME MINISTER AND HIS CIVILIAN MINISTERS, AND THE MILITARY, PLACE HIGH VALUE ON THE MANIFOLD ASPECTS OF THE AMERICAN RELATIONSHIP. YET THE SANYA GOVERNMENT, RELUCTANTLY GRAPPLING WITH A HOST OF PROBLEMS LIKE INFLATION, THE ENERGY CRISIS, THE PORK SHORTAGES, IS BEING BUFFETED BY CONTINUING STUDENT PROTESTS AND A CRITICAL PRESS WHICH FOCUS, INTER ALIA, ON THE ALLEGED BANEFUL IMPACT OF THE UBIQUITOUS AMERICAN PRESENCE ON THAI CULTURE, SOVEREIGNTY, AND EVEN INDEPENDENCE. THE PRIMARY SOURCE OF THIS HARPING CHORUS LIES IN A COMBINATION OF NATIONALISTIC UNIVERSITY AND TEACHER TRAINING COLLEGE PROFESSORS, SOME STUDENT LEADERS, AND A FEW JOURNALISTS. FINANCIAL AND INTELLECTUAL SUPPORT MAY WELL REINFORCE THIS CAMPAIGN, BUT WE CANNOT YET IDENTIFY THE SOURCE. AT THE SAME TIME, WE HAVE MANY FRIENDS IN THAILAND WHO WANT TO MAINTAIN A SPECIAL US-THAI RELATIONSHIP. IF WE

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HEED THE NOW ABUNDANT AND SOMETIMES VULGAR HANDWRITING ON THE WALL BY LOWERING OUR PROFILE, WE OUGHT TO BE ABLE TO RIDE OUT THE CURRENT STORM AND ALLOW THE STRONG INSTITUTIONAL FACTORS FAVORING CLOSE BILATERAL COOPERATION TO REASSERT THEMSELVES. IF HOWEVER SOME OTHER PUBLIC RELATIONS CALAMITY BEFALLS US BEFORE THE PRESENT WOUNDS ARE HEALED, IT COULD CREATE A CRISIS FOR THE RTG WITH SERIOUSLY ADVERSE CONSEQUENCES FOR OUR INTERESTS IN THAILAND.

END SUMMARY.

A. INTERPRETATION AND ANALYSIS OF EVENTS

1. THE OCTOBER 1973 CHANGE OF GOVERNMENT IN THAILAND SHOULD HAVE INDUCED THE ELEMENTS OF THE U.S. MISSION TO CHANGE THEIR OPERATIONAL STYLE AND VISIBILITY. THE UPROAR CAUSED BY THE FAKE LETTER HAS MADE SUCH CHANGES MANDATORY. RADICAL ALTERATIONS IN THAI-U.S. RELATIONS DO NOT SEEM IN THE OFFING UNDER THE CURRENT GOVERNMENT, CURRENTLY SCHEDULED FOR MID-1974.

2. THE UNSETTLING SITUATION WE ARE NOW FACING IN THAILAND HAS BEEN IN PROCESS OF ACCELERATED GESTATION FOR THE PAST TWO DECADES. OUR MILITARY PRESENCE SHIFTED FROM A TRAINING MISSION TO DEPLOYED FORCES WHEN ARMY AND MARINE UNITS CAME INTO THAILAND IN 1961 AND 1962. DURING THE VIETNAM WAR, THE LARGE NUMBERS OF GI'S VISITING THAILAND ON R&R AND PLEASURING THEMSELVES WITH WILLING THAI MAIDENS ENHANCED THE DAMAGING EFFECT ON THAI CULTURAL SENSITIVITIES OF OUR LARGE ALIEN PRESENCE. DURING THE 1960S THERE WAS A LARGE INCREASE IN THE NUMBER OF THAI STUDENTS STUDYING ABROAD. THE INFUSION OF U.S. MONEY, MILITARY MEN, EQUIPMENT, AND BASE CONSTRUCTION PARALLELED THE RAPID EXPANSION OF OLDER THAI EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF NEW ONES. MANY OF THE YOUNGER MEMBERS OF THE FACULTY OF THESE INSTITUTIONS WERE TRAINED IN THE UNITED STATES AND CAME BACK PREPARED TO CRITICIZE THAI SOCIETY AS WELL AS THE COUNTRY FROM WHICH THEY HAD RECEIVED THEIR EDUCATION.

3. THE ACCELERATED MODERNIZATION OF THAILAND THAT THE FOREGOING FACTORS INTRODUCED, AND THE EFFECTS

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OF RAPID POPULATION GROWTH, HAVE TOGETHER IMPACTED ON TRADITIONAL THAI SOCIETY AND CREATED CULTURAL CONFLICTS WHICH CONTRIBUTE DIRECTLY TO THE PRESENT POLITICAL TURMOIL. THE FACT THAT THE 65 PER CENT OF THE THAI POPULATION UNDER 25 YEARS OF AGE HAS BEEN MORE SUSCEPTIBLE TO MODERNIZING INFLUENCE THAN THEIR ELDERS HAS WIDENED THE GENERATION GAP. THE OLDER THAI OFTEN VIEW THE PRESENT TURBULENCE, REGARDLESS OF ITS ACTUAL ORIGIN, AS A RESULT OF AMERICAN INFLUENCE, ALTHOUGH THE JAPANESE ECONOMIC SURGE IN THAILAND IS INCREASINGLY THE OBJECT OF STUDENT PROTEST. THE LARGE AND VISIBLE AMERICAN PRESENCE IN THAILAND SERVES AS AN OBVIOUS AND NATURAL TARGET FOR MANY LOCAL COMPLAINTS. MANY THAI NOW CONVERT THE MUTUALITY OF INTERESTS EVIDENT DURING THE VIETNAM WAR TO A SENSE OF BEING USED. THIS SITUATION NOTWITHSTANDING, THE PRESENT GOVERNMENT LEADERS CONTINUE TO WANT A STRONG U.S.-THAI RELATION.

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4. THESE LEADERS ARE THEMSELVES BEGINNING TO BECOME APPREHENSIVE OF SOME OF THE GOALS AS WELL AS THE TACTICS THAT INTELLECTUAL AND STUDENT LEADERS EMPLOY. THIS APPREHENSION EXISTS EVEN THOUGH THE EFFORT NOW UNDERWAY TO RESTRUCTURE THE THAI SOCIO-POLITICAL SYSTEM HAS WON ESTEEM FOR THAILAND ELSEWHERE IN ASIA.

5. IN THIS RESTIVE ENVIRONMENT ANOTHER INCIDENT, IN THE HANDS OF PRESSURE GROUPS LIKE THE STUDENTS, COULD INDUCE THE GOVERNMENT TO REQUEST A REDUCTION IN OUR PRESENT LEVEL OF FORCES. CONTINUED REDUCTION OF LESS ESSENTIAL

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UNITS, AND COMPLETE FRANKNESS WITH RTG REPRESENTATIVES INCLUDING SHARING LONGER RANGE PLANNING AS WELL AS CURRENT EVALUATIONS, CAN MITIGATE THIS POSSIBILITY. SUCH ENDEAVORS WILL PROVIDE A FIRMER BASIS FOR RTG SUPPORT IN PUBLIC STATEMENTS AND IN PRIVATE COUNCILS.

6. THE ACTIVIST STUDENT PROTESTORS HAVE JOINED AN ALLIANCE WITH THEIR PROFESSORS. THIS ALLIANCE, WHICH HAS ATTEMPTED TO ARTICULATE THE NEED FOR A BASIC RESTRUCTURING OF THE POLITICAL PROCESS, CAN BE EXPECTED TO CONTINUE TO GOAD THE GOVERNMENT'S CONSCIENCE. IT WILL PRESSURE THE BUREAUCRACY TO BE MORE RESPONSIVE TO SOME PERCEIVED SOCIAL NEEDS. IF A NEW PARLIAMENT IS ELECTED, THE STUDENTS CAN BE EXPECTED TO REMIND THE PARLIAMENTARIANS OF THEIR RESPONSIBILITIES TO THEIR CONSTITUENTS BY URGING LEGISLATION AND SUPPORTING DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS THAT WILL HELP THE PEOPLE. HOW FAR THIS WILL CARRY IN TERMS OF SUPPORT FOR ADDITIONAL REVENUE MEASURES OR SHIFTS IN RESOURCES TO RURAL AREAS SHOULD BE A SUBJECT OF SKEPTICAL REVIEW. SO FAR THE RECORD IS NOT STELLAR. THE STUDENTS WILL NOT SIMPLY FADE AWAY BUT FACTIONALISM MAY MAKE THEM LESS EFFECTIVE. FLAWS IN THAI SOCIETY, JAPANESE BUSINESS ACTIVITY, AND THE AMERICAN PRESENCE PROVIDE READY ISSUES FOR STUDENT AGITATION.

7. THE CURRENT NATIONAL LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY IS THE MOST REPRESENTATIVE THAILAND HAS EVER HAD. M.R. KUKRIT PROMOJ, ONE OF THAILAND'S MOST ARTICULATE AND WELL-KNOWN PERSONALITIES, PRESIDES OVER IT. IT CAN BE EXPECTED TO REVIEW AND EVENTUALLY APPROVE THE NEW CONSTITUTION, AND MAY ENHANCE THE STRENGTH OF THAT DOCUMENT AS ONE DRAWN UP WITH THIS MODE OF PUBLIC PARTICIPATION. THE CONSTITUTION DRAFTING COMMITTEE, UNLIKE ITS PREDECESSORS, HAS ENJOYED INDEPENDENCE IN ITS DELIBERATIONS. WHEN FINALLY PROMULGATED, THIS CONSTITUTION WILL BE MORE DIFFICULT TO IGNORE THAN WAS THE CASE WITH PAST EDITIONS.

B. U.S. INTERESTS AND OBJECTIVES IN LIGHT OF CURRENT TRENDS

8. U.S. INTERESTS IN THAILAND ARE MILITARY, ECONOMIC, AND POLITICAL, AND EXTEND TO NARCOTICS SUPPRESSION AND
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COUNTERINSURGENCY.

(A) MILITARY

(1) IN THE SHORT RUN OUR INTERESTS IN THAILAND ARE OVERWHELMINGLY MILITARY. OUR MILITARY FORCES BASED IN THAILAND ARE AN ESSENTIAL ELEMENT IN THE U.S. STRATEGY FOR BRINGING STABILITY TO SOUTHEAST ASIS. WE HAVE INFORMED THE RTG THAT IN VIEW OF THE THREATENING BUILDUP OF COMMUNIST FORCES IN SOUTH VIETNAM AND THE UNCERTAIN INDICATIONS OF HANOI'S INTENTIONS, WE CONSIDER THAT OUR COMBAT AIR STRIKE CAPABILITY MUST BE MAINTAINED AT ITS PRESENT LEVEL DURING THE CURRENT DRY SEASON. THE THAI MILITARY ESTABLISHMENT SUPPORTS US IN THIS OBJECTIVE. HANOI IS AWARE OF THE TREMENDOUS POTENTIAL OF THESE FORCES, AND, DESPITE U.S. CONGRESSIONAL ATTITUDES, CAN NEVER BE CERTAIN THAT THE THAI-BASED U.S. FORCES WILL NOT BE EMPLOYED IN THE EVENT IT LAUNCHES A FULL-SCALE ATTACK AGAINST SOUTH VIETNAM.

(2) WE ANTICIPATE A REVALUATION OF U.S. MILITARY REQUIREMENTS FOR USE OF THAI BASES NO LATER THAN MAY 1974, AND THE RTG EXPECTS CONTINUING CONSULTATIONS WITH US. WE ESTIMATE THAT IT WILL BE ESSENTIAL TO THE PRESERVATION OF OUR ACCESS TO THAI BASES, EVEN WITH A FRIENDLY RTG, TO MAKE SUBSTANTIAL WITHDRAWALS OF COMBAT AIR UNITS IN MID-1974. IT WOULD BE HIGHLY DESIRABLE TO MAKE THESE MOVES IN THE CONTEXT OF LONGER-RANGE PLANS WHICH CAN BE DISCUSSED IN CONFIDENCE WITH THE THAI LEADERSHIP. WE ARE AWARE THAT NORTH VIETNAM WILL RETAIN A FORMIDABLE CAPACITY FOR AN ALL-OUT OFFENSIVE IN SOUTH VIETNAM DURING THE 1974-75 DRY SEASON.

(B) ECONOMIC

(1) OUR ECONOMIC INTERESTS IN THAILAND AND SOUTHEAST ASIS AS A WHOLE ARE AT PRESENT NOT EXTENSIVE. OUR TRADE WITH SOUTHEAST ASIA, HOWEVER, IS GROWING MORE RAPIDLY THAN OUR TRADE IN MANY OTHER AREAS OF THE WORLD. FOR THIS REASON WE NEED TO BE ABLE TO FOSTER OUR GROWING COMMERCIAL ACTIVITY AND TO RETAIN ACCESS TO SOME OF SOUTHEAST ASIA'S INCREASINGLY VALUABLE RAW MATERIALS AND STRATEGIC SHIPPING ROUTES LINKING THE PACIFIC WITH THE INDIAN OCEAN THROUGH THE PERSIAN GULF. HOPEFULLY, WE CAN HELP BUILD THE ECONOMY OF THE COUNTRIES IN SOUTHEAST ASIA SO THAT ASEAN NATIONS CAN SUPPORT THEIR OWN

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SECURITY NEEDS AND SO THAT ECONOMIC DEPRIVATION CEASES TO CONTRIBUTE TO POLITICAL INSTABILITY.

(C) POLITICAL

(1) IT IS INEVITABLE THAT THAILAND WILL SEEK TO MOVE AWAY FROM ITS PRESENT INTIMATE RELATIONS WITH THE UNITED STATES. DURING THE TRANSITION PERIOD, THE U.S.,

ALONG WITH OTHER DONORS INCLUDING THE INTERNATIONAL BANK FOR RECONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT AND ASIAN DEVELOPMENT BANK SHOULD HELP THE THAI, IF THEY ASK US, IN PRACTICAL WAYS TO PROMOTE THEIR OWN POLITICAL-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT EFFORTS. IF ASKED, THE U.S. SHOULD GIVE ADVICE AND ASSISTANCE IN ACCORDANCE WITH THAI INTERESTS. ONLY THIS APPROACH CAN DEMONSTRATE TO THE THAI THAT THE U.S. HAS THEIR BEST INTERESTS AT HEART.

(2) A CAREFUL READING OF FOREIGN MINISTER CHARUNPHAN'S SPEECH OF 16 JANUARY 1974 INDICATES THAT LITTLE DISPARITY EXISTS BETWEEN WHAT WE AND THE THAI WOULD LIKE TO SEE ACHIEVED EVENTUALLY IN SOUTHEAST ASIA. THERE IS, HOWEVER, DISAGREEMENT AMONG VARIOUS THAI ABOUT HOW BEST TO REACH THEIR GOALS AND WHETHER SOME OF OUR PRESENT COOPERATIVE EFFORTS ARE USEFUL OR COUNTERPRODUCTIVE. BOTH PARTIES AGREE ON THE NEED TO LIMIT OR BLUNT NORTH VIETNAMESE AGGRESSIVENESS. WE ALSO AGREE ON THE ULTIMATE DESIRABILITY OF THAILAND'S BROADENING ITS FOREIGN POLICY OPTIONS TO INCLUDE RAPPROCHEMENT WITH THE PRC AND ULTIMATELY WITH NORTH VIETNAM. WE ENCOURAGE THE INCREASING THAI FOCUS ON DEVELOPING ASEAN'S POTENTIAL. SO FAR ASEAN SERVES MOSTLY AS A PSYCHOLOGICAL FORUM BUT SHOWS PROMISE OF BECOMING A POSITIVE REGIONAL POLITICAL FORCE.

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(3) DISAGREEMENT EXISTS IN THAILAND OVER WHETHER THE U.S. MILITARY PRESENCE SERVES TO INHIBIT, OR ACTS AS A MAGNET TO ATTRACT, THE AGGRESSIVE ACTIONS OF THE NORTH VIETNAMESE AND THE THAI INSURGENTS. THE SENIOR LEADERSHIP AGREES WITH US THAT STRONG U.S. PRESENCE INHIBITS NORTH VIETNAMESE AGGRESSION IN SOUTHEAST ASIA. THERE ARE MID-LEVEL OFFICIALS IN THE MINISTRIES OF FOREIGN

AFFAIRS, INTERIOR AND OTHERS WHO TEND TO AGREE WITH THE ARGUMENT OF SOME STUDENTS AND INTELLECTUALS THAT OUR PRESENCE IS MORE DANGEROUS TO THAILAND THAN ADVANTAGEOUS.
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(4) IT IS IN OUR INTEREST FOR THE U.S. TO APPEAR TO THE THAI TO HOLD THE INITIATIVE REGARDING WITHDRAWAL SO THAT IT DOES NOT LOOK AS THOUGH WE ARE BEING INVITED OUT, NOR SHOULD HANOI GET WRONG IDEAS ABOUT OUR ABILITIES TO REMAIN AS LONG AS REGIONAL SECURITY NEEDS DICTATE. AT SOME STAGE THAILAND MAY INCLINE TOWARD ASKING FOR OUR WITHDRAWALS SO THAT IT CAN REAP THE DIPLOMATIC CREDIT FOR THEM WITH NORTH VIETNAM.

(D) NARCOTICS

(1) THAILAND REMAINS ONE OF THE CHIEF ROUTES THROUGH WHICH A SIZEABLE OPIUM AND HEROIN SUPPLY ENTERS INTO THE WORLD MARKET. HENCE, NARCOTICS SUPPRESSION CONTINUES TO BE ONE OF OUR MOST IMPORTANT PROGRAM GOALS. IN THIS FIELD, THERE ARE YARIOUS UNDERLYING DIFFERENCES AS WELL AS SOME CONFLUENCES OF INLYREST. THE THAI ARE COOPERATING ACTIVELY WITH US AGAINST NARCOTICS TRAFFICKERS, IN PART BECAUSE THEY SEE A GROWING DRUG USE RATE AMONG THEIR OWN YOUNG PEOPLE, ESPECIALLY IN BANGKOK AND CHIANG MAI. HOWEVER, IN THE ABSENCE OF ACCEPTABLE INCOME PRODUCING CROPS TO SUBSTITUTE, OR OTHER EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES, THEY CANNOT FOR SECURITY REASONS AFFORD TO FURTHER

ALIENATE THE HILLTRIBE POPULATION THROUGH SUPPRESSION
OPERATIONS AGAINST OPIUM GROWERS.

(2) ADDITIONALLY, THAI SECURITY ARRANGEMENTS
FOR THEIR NORTHERN AREAS ARE PREDICATED ON ACQUIESCING
IN THE PRESENCE OF BURMESE AND CHINESE DISSIDENT AND
TRAFFICKING GROUPS ON THAI SOIL. THE THAI SUPREME COMMAND
DEPENDS ON THESE GROUPS AS A BUFFER AGAINST THE PRC-
SUPPORTED WHITE FLAG COMMUNISTS IN BURME.
THE THAI CANNOT RISK HAVING THESE GROUPS TURN AGAINST
THAILAND, SINCE THE PRESENT DEPLOYMENTS OF THAI SECURITY
FORCES ALONG THE BURMA FRONTIER ARE INCAPABLE OF

FIGHTING THEM OFF.

(E) INSURGENCY

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(1) WE CONTINUE TO SHARE WITH THE THAI AN
INTEREST IN HELPING THEM SUPPRESS THEIR INSURGENCY, BUT
UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES SHOULD THE THAI COUNTERINSURGENCY
EFFORT BE MORE IMPORTANT TO US THAN IT IS TO THEM. IN
THE FINAL ANALYSIS, THEY HAVE TO SET THE PRIORITIES
AND LIVE WITH THE RESULTS.

(2) WE ARE PRESENTLY REEXAMINING THE NATURE
AND SCOPE OF OUR ADVICE AND ASSISTANCE IN COUNTERINSURGENCY
IN TERMS OF THE NEW THAI DOMESTIC POLITICAL SITUATION AND
ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR THAI-U.S. RELATIONS. WE INTEND IN
THE SUCCEEDING WEEKS AND MONTHS TO PUT THE PROBLEM
FRANKLY TO THAI LEADERS IN AN ATTEMPT TO PROBE THEIR VIEWS
OF THE INSURGENCY PROBLEM AND OF WHAT ASSISTANCE, IF ANY,
THEY MIGHT LIKE FROM US. AS THE CIA LETTER INCIDENT
POINTS UP, EXCESSIVE AMERICAN ZEAL COMES ACROSS AS
INTERFERING WITH THAI SOVEREIGNTY. MOREOVER, EVEN IF WE
DETERMINE THAT THE RTG IS UNLIKELY EVER TO COME TO
GRIPS WITH THE TRIUMPH OVER THE INSURGENCY, WE BELIEVE
THAT WE SHOULD DECIDE AGAINST FURTHER ASSISTANCE ON THE
GROUNDS THAT NO AMOUNT OF ADVICE, MONEY, AND
MATERIAL CAN SUPPLANT THE HARD DECISIONS THAT ONLY THE
SOVEREIGN GOVERNMENT CAN MAKE. IN ANY EVENT, WE WOULD
BE UNLIKELY TO WANT TO HELP RTG COUNTERINSURGENCY
EFFORTS IN THE SAME WAYS AS IN THE PAST.

C. PROBLEMS AND OPPORTUNITIES

9. THERE ARE FEW CRUCIAL PROBLEMS THAT THIS EMBASSY'S
REPORTING OVER THE PAST MONTHS AND YEARS HAS NOT
IDENTIFIED AND ADDRESSED. THEY REMAIN AS PROBLEMS BECAUSE

INTERNAL FACTORS HAVE PRECLUDED OUR DOING MUCH ABOUT THEM DESPITE CONSIDERABLE EFFORT ON OUR PART. EXAMPLES ARE THE HIGH LEVEL OF INSTITUTIONALIZED CORRUPTION, THE NARCOTICS FLOW THROUGH AND OUT OF THAILAND, AND THE DESULTORY RTG COUNTERINSURGENCY EFFORTS.

10. THAI SUPPORT QQR OUR PROLONGED EFFORTS IN INDOCHINA HAS LESSENED OUR CREDIBILITY AS AN INTERESTF ALLY OF THE THAI IN THEIR ATTEMPTS TO DEVELOP THEIR OWN COUNTRY. WHILE RTG OFFICIALS ACKNOWLEDGE THAT MUCH OF OUR EFFORT
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IN INDOCHINA HAS BEEN IN THAILAND'S INTEREST, THE THAI PUBLIC IS NOT AWARE OF THE ADVANTAGES TO THAILWA OF OUR STANDING UP TO THE NORTH VIETNAMESE. THE DRASTICALLY CHANGED THAI INTERNAL SITUATION REQUIRES NEW PERCEPTIONS AND APPROACHES TO MAINTAINING U.S. INTERESTS IN THAILAND. OUR RELATIONS WIL THAILAND SHOULD BE CONDUCTED SO AS TO STRENGTHEN OUR CREDIBILITY AS AN ALLY OF THE THAI PEOPLE, AND AS SUPPORTERS OF THEIR INTERESTS AND OF THEIR ATTEMPT TO BUILD A MORE REPRESENTATIVE AND RESPONSIBLE SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT.

11. THIS PROBLEM IS ABOVE ALL ONE OF STYLE. WE ARE BROADENING, INTENSIFYING, AND SYSTEMATIZING OUR PERSONAL CONTACTS AND RELATIONSHIPS WITH BROADER SEGMENTS OF THE THAI BODY POLITIC, INCLUDING THE ACADEMIC COMMUNITY. WE INTEND TO PARTICIPATE IN INFORMAL DISCUSSIONS CONCERNING PROBLEMS THAT THE CURRENT EFFORT TO RESTRUCTURE THAILAND'S SOCIO-POLITICAL PROCESS IS BOTH ENCOUNTERING AND CREATING. THROUGH THESE EFFORTS, WE HOPE TO BE ABLE TO IDENTIFY WAYS TO HELP THE NEW CIVILIAN GOVERNMENT CHOOSE POLICIES WHICH WILL PROMOTE THE POTENTIAL OF THE THAI ECONOMY.

12. BECAUSE OF THE LATENT FRUSTRATION OVER THE AMERICAN ROLE THAT THE CIA FAUX PAS BROUGHT TO A HEAD, IT WILL TAKE TIME, CIRCUMSPECTION, AND PATIENCE TO ESTABLISH A NEW RAPPORT WITH THE PEOPLE OF THAILAND. OUR DIPLOMATIC POSTURE WILL AVOID TAKING ON THAILAND'S PROBLEMS AS OU

OWN. WE CLEARLY CANNOT SOLVE THEM ON BEHALF OF THE THAI EVEN IF THE THAIMAY NOT BE ABLE TO SOLVE MANY OF THEM ON THEIR OWN BEHALF.

13. THE MAJOR UNSETTLING EFFECT OF U.S. POLICY ON THAILAND IS OUR SHIFT AWAY FROM A PRINCIPALLY MILITARY ROLE WITHOUT COMPENSATING ECOKOOMIC ASSISTANCE EFFORTS. THE FORMER THAI LEADERSHIP WAS PSYCHOLOGICALLY UNATTUNED TO SUCH A CHANGE, AND HAD THE CONSEQUENT FEELING OESBEING CUT

ADRIFT. TO SOME EXTENT, THE SENIOR OFFICIAL OF THE
PRESENT CARETAKER GOVERNMENT SHARE THIS APPREHENSION.

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14. PERHAPS WE CAN CONVINCE THE THAI THAT THE LEVEL
OF OUR MILITARY AND ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE IS LESS IMPORTANT
THAN FREE WORLD LOAN AND GRANT ASSISTANCE, PLUS THEIR
OWN RESOURCES AND POLICIES, IN SOLVING THEIR OWN BASIC
PROBLEMS. ON OUR SIDE, WE NEED URGENTLY TO PRUNE OUR
OFFICIAL ESTABLISHMENT, LOWER OUR PROFILE, AND CHANGE
OUR OPERATING STYLE. WE NEED TO ALTER THE BELIEF ON THE
PART OF SOME THAI THAT WE SEE THAILAND ONLY AS AN OPERATING
BASE FOR INDOCHINA-RELATED OPERATIONS TO THAT OF A
GENUINE SUPPORT OF THAILAND'S POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC

DEVELOPMENT. ONLY THUS CAN WE PRESERVE OUR INTERESTS

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IN THAILAND OVER THE LONG TERM. WHENEVER POSSIBLE, WE SHOULD STIMULATE OTHER FREE COUNTRIES AND ORGANIZATIONS TO ASSIST THAI EFFORTS TO DEVELOP THEIR NATION.

15. FORTUNATELY, MOST PRESENT OR POTENTIAL LEADERS IN THAILAND CONTINUE TO SHARE MANY SECURITY AND POLICY VIEWPOINTS AND INTERESTS WITH THE UNITED STATES. THE MAJORITY OF THE THAI ELITE WHO HAVE GONE TO SCHOOL ABROAD HAVE STUDIED IN THE UNITED STATES. WE HAVE POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS WITH THE PRESENT RTG CIVILIAN LEADERSHIP AND WITH MANY MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY. WE ARE CONTINUING OUR CLOSE CONTACTS WITH THE THAI MILITARY.

16. WE NEED TO THINK THROUGH IN THE WEEKS AHEAD AS WE PREPARE OUR FISCAL YEAR 1976 ECONOMIC AND MILITARY ASSISTANCE PROPOSALS JUST HOW TO ADJUST THEM TO REFLECT THE NEW RELATIONSHIPS WE (AND THE THAI) WANT. IN THIS PROCESS WE WILL NEED TO EXPLORE WITH THE PRESENT AND POST-ELECTION GOVERNMENT THOSE INTERESTS AND PRIORITIES AND HOW WE MIGHT HELP. WE OWE A DEBT TO THE THAI PEOPLE, WHO HAVE BEEN SO HELPFUL TO US IN PURSUING OUR LARGER INDOCHINA INTERESTS, AND AS A GREAT POWER WE MUST ACT HONORABLY TOWARD THEM NOW.

17. WHILE IT IS TRUE THAILAND MAY NOT FIT ALL THE CRITERIA FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE, IT HAS FAR TO GO ALONG THE PATH OF SOCIAL-POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT. THERE IS A GROSS IMBALANCE BETWEEN THAILAND'S ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT "SUCCESS" IN BANGKOK AND THE SOCIAL-POLITICAL UNDERDEVELOPMENT WHICH MARKS MOST OF THE COUNTRY. AS WE DEVELOP OUR FUTURE ECONOMIC AID STRATEGY WE WILL NEED ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS WHICH WILL HELP THE RTG TO TAKE DIFFICULT POLICY DECISIONS WHICH COULD SPEED RURAL DEVELOPMENT GROWTH. THE FACT THAT OTHER DONORS PLAY A MORE VITAL ROLE THAN WE PROVIDES A NEW MEASURE OF FLEXIBILITY AND FREEDOM TO BOTH THE RTG AND TO US. IN ADDITION, OUR STRATEGY NEEDS TO CONTEMPLATE A TRANSITION FROM CONCESSIONAL U.S. ASSISTANCE DURING THE 1970'S

D. PROSPECTS FOR THE RTG

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18. DESPITE SANYA'S REPEATED THREATS OF RESIGNATION, WE ENVISION THAT THE SANYA GOVERNMENT WILL CONTINUE IN POWER UNTIL THE SUMMER OF 1974 WHEN AN ELECTED DEMOCRATIC REGIME IS SCHEDULED TO REPLACE IT. IF EXCESSIVE PUBLIC DISORDER DEVELOPS WE WOULD EXPECT THE MILITARY TO MOVE IN TO ASSURE A FIRMER GOVERNMENT UNDER THE KING'S AUTHORIZATION RATHER THAN ARROGATING POWER TO THEMSELVES. IF THIS MOVE OCCURS, A STRONGER SECURITY-MILITARY ELEMENT INVOLVEMENT IN A TEMPORARY GOVERNMENT MAY BE ACCEPTABLE TO STUDENTS AND THE PEOPLE IF THE CIVILIAN GOVERNMENT REMAINS LARGELY UNCHANGED.

19. WE ANTICIPATE THAT THE DRAFT CONSTITUTION WILL BE PRESENTED TO THE CABINET IN EARLY FEBRUARY. ENSUING PUBLIC DISCUSSION, AND NATIONAL LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY DEBATE OF THAT DOCUMENT, SHOULD ABSORB PUBLIC ATTENTION FROM MID-FEBRUARY UNTIL PROMULGATION OF THE NEW CONSTITUTION TOWARD THE END OF APRIL.

20. POLITICAL CAMPAIGNING FOR THE NEW ASSEMBLY SHOULD GET UNDERWAY BETWEEN PUBLICATION OF THE DRAFT CONSTITUTION AND ITS PROMULGATION IN FINISHED FORM. WE CAN EXPECT THAT CRITICISM OF THE AMERICAN PRESENCE WILL BE A POPULAR THEME OF MANY OF THE CONTENDING CANDIDATES OF PARTIES. ONCE THE ELECTIONS ARE HELD (MID-JULY TO MID-AUGUST) WE ANTICIPATE BEING ABLE TO WORK WITH WHATEVER NEW GOVERNMENT IS FORMED DESPITE THE RESIDUAL DAMAGE TO OUR IMAGE THAT THE CAMPAIGN INFLECTS.

21. THE CHANCES FOR THIS PROCESS TO REMAIN ON SCHEDULE RESTS UPON A TRIANGULAR UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN THE KING, SANYA, AND GENERAL KRIS SIVARA. IF SANYA'S IMAGE OF SELF-EFFACING INEFFECTUALITY SHOULD GROW, THERE ARE ELEMENTS WITHIN THE ARMY THAT MIGHT WISH TO PUT AN END TO THE PRESENT REGIME AND REPLACE IT WITH A MODIFIED MILITARY ONE OPERATING UNDER THE ROYAL SEAL.

22. BARRING UNUSUAL EVENTS SUCH AS THE CIA LETTER INCIDENT, WE SHOULD BE ABLE TO MAINTAIN UNTIL THE END OF THE DRY SEASON IN MAY 1974 THE MAJOR SHARE OF THE U.S. FORCES CURRENTLY STATIONED IN THAILAND. THE THAI
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WHO WILL ATTACK THE AMERICAN PRESENCE WILL MOST LIKELY NOT BE ATTUNED TO THE BALANCE OF POWER IN SOUTHEAST ASIA NOR TO THE THREAT THAT NORTH VIETNAM POSES TO THE REGION. THEY WILL CRITICIZE FOREIGN TROOP PRESENCE AS A SHAMEFUL INDICATION THAT THAILAND IS NOT IN CONTROL OF ITS OWN TERRITORY. THE CONSERVATIVE ELEMENTS THAT DOMINATE THE PRESENT INTERIM GOVERNMENT

HAVE A MUCH BETTER UNDERSTANDING THAN THE PUBLIC OF WHY WE HAVE TROOPS HERE. WE THUS DO NOT ENVISION THAT THE GOVERNMENT LEADERS WILL THEMSELVES INITIATE MAJOR MOVES TO REDUCE THAT PRESENCE UNLESS COMPELLED TO ACCEDE IN SOME DEGREE TO PUBLIC PRESSURE.

23. CONCLUSION: IN SUM, THE CHANGES WE PERCEIVE IN BOTH THE DOMESTIC THAI SCENE AND OUR CHANGING RELATIONSHIP WITH SOUTHEAST ASIA INDICATE POLITICAL MATURING IN BOTH PARTIES AND INCREASING EQUALITY IN THE BILATERAL RELATIONSHIP. THOUGH THE READJUSTMENT CAUSES PAINS AND DISLOCATIONS ON BOTH SIDES, THE PROCESS APPEARS TO US SUBSTANTIALLY HEALTHY AND LIKELY TO LEAD TO GREATER SATISFACTION IN BOTH HALVES OF THE PARTNERSHIP. THE SUCCESS OF THIS TRANSITION WILL DEPEND HEAVILY ON THE THAI RECOGNITION THAT THEY CAN HAVE A SUCCESSFUL POLITY AND ECONOMY; THAT WHAT IS NEEDED ARE EFFECTIVE POLICIES TO PROMOTE DOMESTIC GROWTH ON A MORE EQUITABLE BASIS; AND ON THE RECOGNITION THAT THAT THE THAI HAVE TO ESTABLISH A BROADER RELATIONSHIP WITH OTHER SOURCES OF ASSISTANCE THAT STAND READY TO SHARE OUR BURDEN. IF THE THAI INFER THAT WE ARE NOT PREPARED TO BE RESPECTFUL OF THEIR INDEPENDENCE, AND IF THEY FEEL OVERSHADOWED BY THE BURDEN OF RUNNING THEIR OWN SHOW, THEN THE READJUSTMENTS THAT BOTH SIDES SEEK COULD CURDLE AND SOUR A RELATIONSHIP IN WHICH WE HAVE A CONTINUING AND VITAL STAKE.

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